

Contributions

THE SUSTAINING POWER OF HOPE

MARTIN SHIVELY

Not for our joyful, but for our tearful hours has God provided the blessed boon of hope. And none can expect to pass over the highway of life and escape the tearful hours, and so we may say that all were remembered in the bestowal of the gift. For if no other occasion of sorrow arises, and our lives are free from disappointment and care, there is yet one enemy upon man's track that not fail to overtake him and lay him low. How vast the numbers that have fallen! and how great the grief which came to human hearts as one by one they passed beyond. Ere long yet other dear ones, our friends and even we ourselves shall lie beside them, and the mysteries of dissolution, shall be mysteries no more. We cannot deceive ourselves; even tho all Nature smiles most sweetly, and joy fills our souls, Nature's gayest garb will give place to one more somber, for the greenest grassblade, and the brightest hued blossoms are hurrying on toward the climax of their existence, and having reached it, they droop, and fade and die. And human life, begun amid such bright surroundings, like grassblade and blossom, may develope day by day, and by its beauty and gladness, may scatter blessing all around but it too is hurrying forward to completion and whether it reaches the goal early or late, having reached it, it ends as it begun, in apparent helplessness,—

"The boost of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that wealth or beauty ere gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour,
The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

Amid these somber endings, the blasting of earthly hopes, the breaking of earthly ties, the opening and closing of earthly sepulchers and the rapid current of our tears, we see only as it were "thru a glass darkly."—All is mystery. The pallid forms all unresponsive to our calls or entreaties, crumble back to dust before our very eyes. The soul cries in anguish, "Why is it? How can it be?" But to our questions there comes no audible answer. All is silent as the grave. And to our eyes there comes no reassuring vision, for all things appear as they did before. But down deep in our souls there is at least some degree of confidence, and the darkness is not complete, for Christian hope arises, as a beautiful star and sheds sweet light upon our way. Blessed hope! How grand, how uplifting! The sorrowful necessity of saying "farewell," is less sorrowful, because we hope to join in glad greetings later on. And the little flowers now planted amid our tears, hope sees as being more beautiful still, for in the new conditions which it invents for them, there is naught to prevent perfect development, and perfect beauty. No blighting frosts no scorching suns. Thus, tho our tears may flow, they are somewhat less scalding; tho our hearts may ache, the

anguish is less keen, and tho the parting is most trying, yet it is at least a little easier, because we hope to meet again.

NEW YORK NOTES

J. L. GILLIN

I have been reading Holsinger's History some lately. I had hoped to have read it before this but school work has kept me very busy. I desire to say a merited word for this book however. As far as I have read it, it is very commendable. I hope the brethren are buying it largely. It deserves a place on the book shelf of every Brethren family. Put it into the hands of your children or at least where they can get it, so they will grow up with a knowledge of the causes which lie at our beginnings. Three dollars will not go very far to buy a hog or a steer, but by putting that much into a nicely bound, well printed, well illustrated and well written book by the prime mover in the scene you make it possible for your child to grow up with a knowledge of the church you profess to love and perhaps stir your own zeal a little.

I have been impressed, as I read, with the scholarship shown by Mack and those others who started the movement in Germany. It seems remarkable that they happened upon so many of the ordinances of the Apostolic church, which later research has shown to be so well attested. It certainly ought to stir us all to strive more for that profound scholarship which with vital godliness means so much to any church.

VACATION

We spent part of our vacation reading the Book of Acts in Greek. It is a wonderful story. It was the first time I had read it from beginning to end in Greek, and it moved me greatly. The power of the spirit was one thought which came to me forcefully. Another was the need of preparation for efficient work for God. Another God's care for his own.

JERRY MCAULEY MISSION

One night during vacation, wife and I went down to the old Jerry McAuley mission on Water street. It was a delightful experience,—a real spiritual tonic. This mission is located almost under the New York end of the great Brooklyn Suspension bridge in a very "tough" part of the city. The very scum of New York exist down in this district. As we were going down at a dark corner, I saw a small boy suddenly slide out of the door to the fire box of an old unused stationary engine and not knowing for sure whether we were on the right street for the mission, I stepped towards him and asked him where the mission was. As soon as I spoke, he started to run, but when he saw I was not a "cop" he turned and answered my question. By the sound of things there must have been several more inside. That, is the way numbers of homeless boys are living in New York every night. They grow up to be the future

thieves and "toughs" of these and other cities.

We were very much surprised to find the room, a moderate sized store room well filled with all kinds of men. Most were sober, but many were dirty and not a few very ragged. Some were very clean and neat looking. A large number of men got up and testified, in every case they told just how long the Lord Jesus had kept them saved. In some cases it was years. In others only a few days since they had found the Man of Nazareth, the all sufficient Savior. Men got up and testified how that Jesus Christ had taken from them every desire for drink or whatever their besetting sin was. Drink and gambling seemed to have the preeminence among the causes of their woe. The one thing that impressed me most forcibly was the fact that no long argument needed to be made to these men to prove to them that they were lost and in need of a Savior. From the testimonies of those who had been saved and from the readiness shown by those who were not to come forward and kneel down it was easy to see that they had got where they knew in all its awfulness that they were lost men. I wondered, if that might not have been why Jesus worked so constantly among this class of people. He could not persuade the self righteous Pharisees that they needed a Savior, but the outcasts had no need of such persuasion, they knew it. All they needed was to know that Jesus was able to save them from sin. Of that, Jesus could soon convince them.

It has seemed to me thru a ministry of about eight years that the hardest thing for the preacher to do in converting respectable people is to convince them of their need of a Savior, so that they will realize what it means to be lost. Thank God, the preacher does not have the task alone. "When he (the Holy Spirit) is come he will convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of Judgment."—Jno. 16:8.

The trouble here at this mission seems to be to get men to believe that Jesus can save them and then to give themselves unreservedly up to him. Of course, some most wonderful salvations occur, where men in the chains of habit for years have in an instant, by faith in Christ, been saved and are kept saved day by day. It is harder for such men to be kept saved, because it is so hard for them to give up completely, without any reservation. But I wish some of you young men I know, and have prayed for and worked with, could hear those men who have reached the end of their rope, tasted every kind of sin, enjoyed every sinful pleasure,—I wish you could see the fruits of their sin and hear the awful, soul-cursed cry that goes from their hearts as they tell how the Devil has paid them. And I don't mean only the fruits of sin in diseased bodies, tho that is enough to make men weep, but the hardness of heart, the lack of self-respect, the disheartened hopelessness, the despair which sits on every face. Every